



**Safeguarding Children and Child Protection**

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## **Safeguarding Children & Child Protection**

(Including managing allegations of abuse against a member of staff)

### Policy statement

Our setting will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Our safeguarding policy is based on three key commitments.

### Procedures

We carry out the following procedures to ensure we meet three key commitments for safeguarding children and protecting them from harm.

### Key commitment 1

Noah's Ark is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its service delivery.

### Staff and volunteers

- Our designated person (a member of staff) who co-ordinates child protection issues is **Rebecca Langton**
- Our designated officer (a committee member) who oversees this work is: **Captain Jason Davies**. Contactable via the Guard Room 01362 627959 or 01362 627970
- We ensure all staff and parents are made aware of our safeguarding policies and procedures.
- We ensure that this policy is a fair and transparent policy that all parent /carers can understand. Giving clear indication that we will contact children's services without parental consent if we feel there is a child protection issue
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974/ amended version 2014.
- Candidates are informed of the need to carry out 'enhanced disclosure' checks with the DBS-Disclosure and Barring Service before posts can be confirmed.
- Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and DBS checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- We abide by the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Act requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern.
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting (Visitor policy: 1.23)
- We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.



## Key commitment 2

We are committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (HM Government, 2006).

### Responding to suspicions of abuse

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or may be experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure) or through changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play.
- Where such evidence is apparent, some evidence is gathered, however we do not carry out investigations. We then phone the consultation line **at CHILDREN'S ADVICE & DUTY SERVICE (CADS) on 0344 800 8021** ... They will decide what action to take. This action can be anonymous.
- We refer concerns to the local authority children's social care department and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation. In some cases, this may mean the police or another agency identified by the Norfolk Safeguarding Children's Board.
- We take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking questions of children.
- We use the detailed procedures and reporting format contained in Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board when making a referral to children's social care or other appropriate agencies (appendix 1).

### Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that gives cause for concern (disclosure), observes signs or signals that gives cause for concern, such as significant changes in behaviour; deterioration in general well-being; unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect that member of staff:
- listens to the child, offers reassurance and gives assurance that she or he will take action;
- does not question the child;
- makes a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes:
  - the date and time of the observation or the disclosure;
  - the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible;
  - the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time; and the names of any other person present at the time.
- These records are signed and dated and kept in the child's personal file which is kept securely and confidentially (appendix 2).

### Making a referral to the local authority social care team

- "The What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (HMG 2006) contains detailed procedures for making a referral to the local social care team (appendix 3).

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- We keep a copy of this document and follow the detailed guidelines given.
- All members of staff are familiar with **the CHILDREN'S ADVICE & DUTY SERVICE consultation line: 0344 800 8021** and follow the procedures for recording and reporting.

### Informing parents

- Parents are normally the first point of contact; however, we may contact the consultation line and/or police if concerns arise that puts the child at risk.
- If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where the guidance of the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board does not allow this.
- This is when informing the parents puts the child in immediate and serious danger.

### Liaison with other agencies

- We work within the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board guidelines.
- We have a copy of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' for parents and staff and all staff are familiar with what to do if they have concerns.
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority on child protection issues, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of social workers, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the setting and social services to work well together.
- We notify Ofsted of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the wellbeing of children.
- Contact details for the local National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) are also kept.
- If a referral is to be made to Norfolk county council social care department, we act within the area's Safeguarding Children and Child Protection guidance in deciding whether we must inform the child's parents at the same time.

### Allegations against staff

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the setting, or anyone working on the premises occupied by the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse as set out in the reference the complaint policy.
- We follow the guidance of the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board when responding to any complaint that a member of staff, or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, has abused a child.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or working on the premises occupied by the setting, may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
- We refer any such complaint immediately to the LADO department to investigate. We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted and what measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children's social care in conjunction with the police.
- Where the management committee and children's social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the chairperson will suspend the member of staff on full pay, or the volunteer, for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the

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alleged incident has taken place but is to protect the staff as well as children and families throughout the process.

- We ensure staff are aware of the Local Area Designated Officer number and that they may use this at their own discretion - **LADO tel: 01603 223 473** (appendix 4)

## Disciplinary action

- Where a member of staff or a volunteer is dismissed from the setting because of misconduct relating to a child, we notify the Independent Barring Board administrators so that the name may be included on the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults Barred List.

## Key commitment 3

We are committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout its training and learning programmes for adults. It is also committed to empowering young children, through its early childhood curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

## Training

- We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they can recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the setting.

## Planning

- The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being visible to others.
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## Curriculum

- We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be strong, resilient and listened to and that they develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.
- We create within the setting a culture of value and respect for the individual, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background.
- We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

## Confidentiality

- All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board.



## Support to families

- We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- We make clear to parents our role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, providing information, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local children's social care team.
- We will continue to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.
- We follow the Child Protection Plan as set by the child's social care worker in relation to the setting's designated role and tasks in supporting that child and their family, subsequent to any investigation.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the Confidentiality and Client Access to Records procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board.